

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 4062

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, JM, US

SUBJECT: PNP HOLDS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

REF: KINGSTON 3650

1. SUMMARY: THE RULING PEOPLE'S NATIONAL PARTY (PNP) HELD ITS 38TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE SEPTEMBER 16-19. THE FIRST THREE DAYS WERE SPENT IN CLOSED SESSIONS BUT THE LAST WAS MARKED BY A PUBLIC RALLY SCHEDULED FOR THE NATIONAL ARENA BUT MOVED TO THE NATIONAL STADIUM AS A RESULT OF THE LARGE CROWD PRESENT. THE ANNUAL MEETING DEALT WITH PREPARATIONS FOR THE COMING PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS BUT POPULAR ATTENTION WAS CAPTURED BY THE SPEECH OF PRIME MINISTER MICHAEL MANLEY AT THE SEPTEMBER 19 PUBLIC RALLY. END SUMMARY

2. FOCUS ON COMING ELCTIONS -- THE MEETING CENTERED ON THE COMING ELECTIONS. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PARTY'S SITTING MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT WAS SCHEDULED AND IT WAS CLEAR -- BUT NEVER ANNOUNCED -- THAT THE ON-GOING TUSSLE BETWEEN THE PARTY'S MODERATES AND PROGRESSIVES WOULD FIGURE (SEE KINGSTON 3666). RATHER, PAINS WERE
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TAKEN TO MASK THE FACT OF DIVISION AND AT THE END OF

THE FIRST DAY OF THE SESSION, TRADE AND TOURISM MINISTER P.J. PATTERSON, WHO IS A VICE PRESIDENT OF THE PNP, ASSURED THE PRESS THAT "THERE IS NO QUESTION OF A RIFT..."

3. THE TWO ELECTION-ORIENTED STEPS TAKEN BY THE PNP WERE CLOSELY RELATED. IN THE FIRST, THE PARTY ENDORSED A PROPOSAL TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF SEATS IN THE POPULARLY-ELECTED HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM 53 TO 60. IN THE SEOND, IT ANNOUNCED THE NAMES OF 57 OF THE 60 CANDIDATES WHO WILL RUN IF -- AS SEEMS ASSURED-- THE LOWER HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT IS EXPANDED. IN COMMENTING ON THE PARTY'S COMMITMENT TO THE EXPANSION OF THE HOUSE, P.J. PATTERSON STRESSED THAT THE ACTION WOULD "CORRECT THE GROSS INEQUITIES" WHICH FOLLOWED THE LAST RE-DISTRICTING, UNDERTAKEN WHILE THE OPPOSITION JAMAICA LABOR PARTY (JLP) WAS IN POWER. (THE NAMES OF THE PNP'S CANDIDATES WILL BE FORWARDED WHEN THE FULL LIST IS AVAILABLE.)

4. PARTY ELECTIONS: FAMILIAR FACES -- THE PNP ANNUAL MEETING ALSO CHOSE THE PARTY'S OFFICERS FOR THE NEXT YEAR. THERE WERE NO CHANGES, AND THUS THE FOLLOWING CONTINUE TO HOLD THE OFFICES INDICATED:

PRESIDENT: MICHAEL MANLEY

VICE PRESIDENTS: P.J. PATTERSON

ANTHONY SPAULDING, HOUSING MINISTER

HOWARD COOKE, EDUCATION MINISTER

WILLIAM ISAACS, ECONOMIC STABILIZATION
MINISTER

GENERAL SECRETARY: DR. D.K. DUNCAN

DEPUTY GENERAL SECY: KEBLE MUNN, INTERNAL SECURITY MINISTER

TREASURER: DR. KENNETH MCNEILL, HEALTH MINISTER

5. VISITORS FROM ABROAD -- THE PNP HAD, AS IT HAD ADVERTISED, A NUMBER OF FOREIGN GUESTS AT ITS ANNUAL SESSION. SOME WERE JAMAICANS RESIDENT IN EITHER THE UNITED STATES, CANADA OR THE UNITED KINGDOM. OTHERS INCLUDED "FRATERNAL DELEGATES" FROM MEXICO, VENEZUELA, GUYANA, ANGOLA, TANZANIA, CHILE AND, OF COURSE, CUBA. THE CUBANS NUMBERED THREE; WE DO NOT YET KNOW THEIR CONFIDENTIAL

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NAMES. THE CHILEAN, WHO WAS INTERVIEWED ON TELEVISION ON SEPTEMBER 20, IS ONE CARLO PARRA.

6. MANLEY'S SPEECH -- THE CENTRAL EVENT OF THE MEETING WAS PRIME MINISTER MANLEY'S SPEECH ON SEPTEMBER 19, GIVEN TO AN OVERFLOW CROWD(POLIC CLAIM 35,000 TO 40,000). THE SIZE "AND ENTHUSIASM" OF THE CROWD OF PARTY-MEMBERS AND WELL-WISHERS REQUIRED A LAST MINUTE

SHIFT FROM AN INSIDE CONVENTION HALL (THE NATIONAL ARENA) TO THE NATIONAL STADIUM. THIS DID LESSEN THE IMMEDIATE IMPACT OF THE AFFAIR; THE CHANGE OF VENUE APPARENTLY CAUGHT JBC UNAWARE. THE PROMISED LIVE RADIO AND TV COVERAGE FAILED TO MATERIALIZE. THE SPEECH APPARENTLY BEGAN WITH AN ATTACK ON THE PNP'S OPPONENTS, DESCRIBED BY THE PRIME MINISTER AS "A CLIQUE" WHO WERE DETERMINED TO HALT JAMAICA'S PROGRESS TOWARD DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM. TO DO SO, THE "CLIQUE" HAS TAKEN OVER THE JLP (NO A "YO-YO"), "LET LOOSE UPON JAMAICA... VICIOUS PROPAGANDA", ADOPTED A "STRATEGY OF GUNS AND VIOLENCE", AND UNDERTAKEN "ECONOMIC SABOTAGE". THEN MANLEY SET FORTH THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE PNP. NOTING THAT HIS GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN FORCED TO DEAL WITH HIGH PETROLEUM PRICES AND SHARP PRICE INCREASES FOR BOTH CONSUMER AND CAPITAL GOODS, MANLEY SAID, REFERRING TO THE JLP, "IF THAT BUNCH OF REACTIONARY KLEPTO-MANIACS WERE IN POWER WHEN THESE THINGS HIT US, NOTHING WOULD HAVE SAVED US...WE, ALONE, HAD TO FIGHT THE BAUXITE INTERESTS OF THE WORLD, AND THE THING THAT SAVED JAMAICA WAS THE BAUXITE LEVY".

7. MANLEY THEN TOOK THE JLP TO FURTHER TASK, ASSERTING THAT ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS HAD WORSENERED DURING THEIR PERIOD IN POWER (1962-72), STRESSING THERE HAD BEEN INCREASED UNEMPLOYMENT AND GROWING DISPARITIES OF WEALTH. THIS LED HIM TO A LECTURE ON THE RELATIVE BENEFITS OF SOCIALISM AND CAPITALISM IN WHICH THE KEY ELEMENT, AS HE SAW IT, WAS THE LOCUS OF CONTROL OVER THE "SURPLUS WEALTH" CREATED BY PRODUCTION. CLEARLY, ONLY THE STATE WAS TRUSTWORTHY ENOUGH TO INSURE THE PROPER USE OF THE

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WEALTH CREATED. AFTER ONCE AGAIN CITING THE INIQUITIES OF THE "CLIQUE" AND ASSURING HIS AUDIENCE "WE ARE NOT FOR SALE...WE KNOW WHERE WE ARE GOING..". MANLEY INTRODUCED THE FIFTY-SEVEN CANDIDATES AND CLOSED THE MEETING.

8. COMMENT: DETAILS OF THE PNP'S CLOSED SESSIONS ARE NOT YET AVAILABLE BUT IT SEEMS SAFE TO ASSUME THAT THEY INVOLVED BOTH MUCH HORSETRADING AS THE LIST OF CANDIDATES WAS PREPARED (THE FACT THAT THE LIST WAS INCOMPLETE UNDERSCORES THIS) AND CONTINUED TUSSLING BETWEEN THE PARTY'S OLDER, MORE MODERATE MEMBERS AND THE YOUNGER, MORE RADICAL WING. FROM OUR PARTICULAR POINT OF VIEW, WE WERE INTERESTED IN WHAT USE, IF ANY, MANLEY MIGHT SEEK TO MAKE OF THE REVELATIONS OF PHILIP AGEE. AS IT

HAPPENED, HE SAID NOTHING (SEE KINGSTON 4026).

GERARD

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